



Grand Junction Forestry Advisory Board Minutes

December 6, 2021 @ Parks Operations Office

Meeting called to Order by Mollie Higginbotham, at 8:33 AM.

Roll Call

Board Members Present: Bill Cooper
Mollie Higginbotham
Dan Komlo
Kamie Long
Chuck McDaniel, Mayor
Vince Urbina

Absent Board Members: Bennett Boeschstein
Susan Carter

Guests Present: Blake Shewmon
Tanya Travis

Parks & Recreation Staff Present: Rob Davis, City Forester & Open Space Supervisor
Allison Little, Administrative Specialist

Approve Minutes

Vince Urbina made a motion to approve the minutes of the October meeting. The motion was seconded by Kamie Long and carried unanimously.

Introductions

New board members Bill Cooper and Dan Komlo were introduced to the board. Guests, Tanya Travis and Blake Shewmon were introduced as well.

Forestry Updates

2022 Private Ash Treatment and Replacement Program

Rob Davis advised the Board that the Council approved a program to treat privately owned ash trees. The program is a 50/50 cost share and trees would have to be in, at least, fair condition with evidence of some level of stewardship to be treated. This program is for residential trees. If residential trees are disqualified, they could qualify for a voucher to replace trees with an approved variety through local nursery vendors. The next step will be a bid process to solicit proposals (based on guidelines provided by the City) from vendors. The program has a treatment and planting budget as well as a marketing/outreach budget. Ciara DePinto has been working on a tag line and logo/mascot. The working idea is Root for Our Trees because it can be used for other forestry initiatives (Root for Smart Water, Root for your Ash, etc). She is leaning towards a Great

Horned Owl as the mascot. Board members wondered what kind of treatment would be done. Rob advised the board that there are three types of treatments, and the City has chosen trunk injection because of the type of chemical used, and that the chemical stays in the tree with little external impact.

Public Comment

Rob Davis invited Blake Shewmon to speak to the group as he had to leave for class. Blake is a senior Environmental Science major who is auditing water usage at CMU for his capstone project. One of the recommendations from his audit includes increasing the canopy cover on campus. There is currently no inventory on campus and Blake inquired about potential opportunities to partner with the City to complete projects like that. Kamie Long mentioned that there is a student group on campus that may be able to assist and invited Blake to work with this group to accomplish some of his objectives.

Education and Outreach

Rob was on the Christi Reece podcast with Ken Sherbenou to talk about Parks and Recreation, including trees and how to protect them. He is also working on a flyer for new homeowners about tree care.

Holiday Lighting

The forestry division is completing work on Main and Colorado Avenue. This project was really impacted by absences due to Covid.

Late Season Plantings

Also delayed due to Covid absences, the aquaponics trees still need to be planted. The last planting should be completed by next week.

Removal and Stump Grinding

There are 34 citizen removals in the system and 230 black dot ash trees requiring removal. There are also 92 stumps that need to be ground.

Gold Leaf Award

Grand Junction won the Gold Leaf Award from the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the ISA for an outstanding Arbor Day Activities.

Georgia Tree Conference

Rob made a presentation to the Georgia tree Council on the Aquaponics system.

SFI Standards

Rob advised the board that there is a group working to establish sustainability standards for urban forestry. Rob made comments on a draft of the document particular to our region and how sustainable forestry might look different here than in another region.

PlanIT Geo Canopy Data Project

PlanIt Geo will analyze the total number of trees (including private trees) in the city and work out an appraisal value.

New Business

Siberian Elm

This item was tabled until January.

Demo Contractors and Tree Licensing

Per City ordinance tree removals should be performed by a licensed tree contractor. There was recently a removal happening as part of a new development at G Road and 27 Road. Rob is working with engineering to help them understand the importance of this code requirement. Board members felt strongly that mature trees are important and need protecting throughout the development plan approval process.

New Dimensions Volunteer Group

Rob has been contacted by the New Dimensions group which sets up informational continuing education for their members. They are interested about learning about trees, tree care, and the efforts of the Forestry Department. Mayor McDaniel noted that he has participated in a New Dimensions class and the group is well run and will be engaged. He recommended taking advantage of the opportunity. Kamie Long and Dan Komlo indicated they were willing to help with a presentation for this group.

Arbor Day 2022

The board discussed what had been planned for the 2020 Arbor Day celebration. There were plans for a nature playground, tree care booth, CSU Extension Demo Day, containerized tree raffle (with a limit on the number of trees a household could win), urban wood auction, seedling giveaway and a tree walk.

Public Comment

Tanya Travis shared that she works with a sustainability group and they are looking for ways to plug in and expand. They would like to help with projects and education, perhaps assist with arboretum upkeep and education. Could a Tree Tour Guide program be created to talk about historic trees, or species of trees, perhaps start a Main Street Tree Walk. The board suggested Ms. Travis also reach out to the Colorado Tree Coalition to see if her group could work with them as well.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned by acclamation at 10:07 AM.

Next Forestry Advisory Board Meeting - Thursday, January 6, 2021 at 8:30 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Allison Little, Administrative Specialist